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ABSTRACT

In May of 1972 the Higher Education Panel (HEP) of the American Council on Education conducted a survey of colleges and universities across the U.S. to determine the type and amount of campus disruption caused by the April 1972 increased bombing effort in North Vietnam by the U.S. It was found that: (1) an estimated 27% of the colleges and universities experienced campus unrest, with the unrest concentrated in the larger universities and the more selective colleges; (2) war protest was more likely to occur at private universities rather than at public universities or 4-year colleges, at institutions located in the Northeast or the West and Southwest rather than in the Southeast or Midwest, and at predominantly white rather than predominantly black colleges; (3) in comparison with previous years, destruction of property during the April 1972 demonstrations was rare, and on fewer than 2% of the campuses was any property damaged; and (4) civil authorities were rarely called in to deal with protests. (HS)

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Survey No. 9 May 9, 1972

War Protest on U.S. Campuses During April, 1972

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In April of 1972, the United States stepped up its bombing of North Vietnam. As a result, the nation's college and university campuses again became the scene of widespread protest demonstrations during the week of April 17, to be climaxed by a general student strike called for April 21.

The national news media once more turned their attention to protest events on the campuses; reporting was, however, focused chiefly on the more visible, elite institutions and on those where dramatic disruption occurred, although general student support at local institutions was often characterized as "apathetic." In light of the situation, the Higher Education Panel (HEP) of the American Council on Education (ACE) undertook a survey in which the main objective was to obtain a more balanced picture of the national scene. In addition, the survey sought to compare protest incidence and severity during this period with the incidence and severity of campus unrest during two earlier periods.

(1) Two years ago, campuses erupted as the result of the spring 1970 invasion of Cambodia. An ACE study of these incidents showed that 16 percent of the nation's institutions experienced unrest in the weeks immediately following the invasion. (This figure rose to 24 percent following the student deaths at Kent State University.)[1]

[1] Alexander W. Astin, "New Evidence on Campus Unrest, 1969-70," Educational Record, Winter 1971, pp. 41-46.

Jeannie T. Royer and Richard M. Webb assisted in the preparation of this report.

(2) According to another ACE study, the most recently completed academic year (1970-71) was not as tranquil as is generally believed. During the year, 43 percent of higher educational institutions experienced some protest incident. Compared with earlier years, however, the incidents were less disruptive and more likely to occur at smaller and less visible institutions.[2]

Method

To get quick results, a telephone survey questionnaire was designed (see Appendix A), and calls were made to representatives at a stratified random sample of 242 institutions on April 24-25. These institutions consisted of a representative subsample of the Higher Education Panel, which overlapped with institutions participating in ACE's Cooperative Institutional Research Program and with the institutions used in the two previous ACE studies of campus unrest mentioned above. The response rate was 100 percent. A population weight -- derived from the 36-group cell structure employed in ACE's 1971 Cooperative Institutional Research Program -- was calculated for each institution. This weight is defined as the ratio between the number of institutions in the population within a given cell and the number of HEP institutions in the sample within the same cell (Appendix B).

Results

Recent campus demonstrations in opposition to "the American military presence in Vietnam" involved an estimated 27 percent of

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[2]Alan E. Bayer and Alexander W. Astin, "Campus Unrest 1970-71: Was It Really All That Quiet?" Educational Record, Fall 1971, pp. 301-313.

the nation's colleges and universities. (Several campuses were experiencing protests over other issues at the time of the survey, but these were not counted in the tabulations.) Consistent with earlier ACE findings, unrest was concentrated in the larger universities and the more selective colleges (Table 1). However, the results also confirm the conclusion that unrest in smaller and less selective institutions has been on the rise in recent years.

Table 1 also shows that protest over the war was somewhat more likely to occur at private universities rather than at public universities or four-year colleges, at institutions located in the Northeast or the West and Southwest rather than in the Southeast or Midwest, and at predominantly white rather than predominantly black colleges.

The student strike called for Friday, April 21, was not supported nationally. Table 2 shows that fewer than 4 percent of the nation's institutions reported any general observance of the strike; at only about 2 percent (an estimated 53 institutions) were as many as 30 percent of the students absent from classrooms in support of the strike.

In comparison with previous years, destruction of property was rare. On fewer than two percent of the campuses was any property damaged, although buildings were occupied on an estimated 58 campuses (2.3 percent). On the other hand, peaceful marches and rallies were held at 16 percent of all institutions (an estimated 394 out of the 685 that had protests). Other common protest incidents included silent vigils (an estimated 99 institutions) and the distribution of antiwar literature or petitions (an estimated 55 institutions).

Many HEP respondents were unable to estimate the number of people involved in protest activity at their institution, but of those who did provide estimates, the number averaged about 122 people, with an estimated 52 campus incidents involving more than 500 people (Table 3). In almost all cases, over 90 percent of those involved were students.

Civil authorities were rarely called in to deal with protests. The police or National Guard were mobilized on fewer than 20 campuses, and arrests or injuries occurred on fewer than 10 campuses.

Chief administrative officers at an estimated 100 institutions made some public pronouncement about unrest activity during the week or about the issues involved. At none of the survey institutions, however, did the president announce that the institution would close in observance of the call for the national strike. Indeed, many stated explicitly that the institution would remain open, although at an estimated 72 institutions the administrative officer affirmed support of peaceful dissent. At an estimated 23 institutions, it was announced that the administration had sent a letter expressing concern to the President of the United States or to a member of Congress. Tabulations of these and other pronouncements are shown in Table 4.

When asked to indicate their best guess as to the likelihood of unrest during the last week in April, 45 out of the 242 HEP representatives thought unrest was highly probable. With population weights, this figure would apply to 13.6 percent of the nation's institutions (345 out of 2,532). The remainder of the respondents said that they were not sure of the likelihood, or believed there was little or no chance of protest.

Conclusion

In summary, these data show that the frequency of campus unrest was greater in April, 1972, as a result of stepped-up bombing of North Vietnam, than it had been in the weeks immediately following the spring 1970 invasion of Cambodia (prior to the Kent State incident). However, the tone of unrest was significantly different in that there were few incidents of violence or destruction. Nevertheless, students have manifested their continuing capacity to mobilize in order to protest the war. These results are consistent with those for the last (1970-71) academic year and demonstrate that the campuses are not as "tranquil" as has been supposed and that many students have not lost their active concern over pressing national issues.

Table 1

Proportion of Institutions Experiencing War Protest, by Selected Characteristics

Institutional Characteristic	Number of Institutions		Percent of Population With Protest
	Sample	Population Estimate	
Type and Control			
Public universities	18	114	58.8
Private universities	14	65	73.8
Public four-year colleges	30	351	24.8
Private four-year colleges	138	975	31.7
Public two-year colleges	21	804	18.2
Private two-year colleges	21	223	12.6
Regional Location			
Northeast	76	723	38.5
Midwest	80	788	25.3
Southeast	55	620	14.4
West and Southwest	31	401	29.7
Racial Composition			
Predominantly black	13	110	28.0
Predominantly white	229	2,422	6.4
Enrollment Size[a]			
Small (under 1,000)	91	1,070	18.2
Moderate (1,000-5,000)	105	1,016	29.1
Large (over 5,000)	46	946	43.5
Selectivity[b]			
Highly selective	80	370	46.5
Moderately selective	81	687	38.3
Nonselective	81	1,475	16.9
TOTAL	242	2,532	27.1

[a]Total enrollment in 1967.

[b]Average academic aptitude test score (ACT, SAT, NMSQT) of enrolled entrants. All scores converted to equivalent NMSQT scores, with under 97 termed nonselective, 97 to 112 termed moderately selective, and over 112 termed highly selective.

Table 2

Type of Incident Taking Place on Campus[a]

Type of Incident	Population N	Percent of Population
No incident	1,847	72.9
General student strike	91	3.6
1-10 percent out of class	29	1.1
11-30 percent out of class	9	0.4
30-50 percent out of class	30	1.2
Over 50 percent out of class	23	0.9
Peaceful march or rally	394	15.6
Silent vigil	99	3.9
Destruction of property	28	1.1
Burning of building	11	0.4
Occupation of building	58	2.3
Discussion groups/seminars	126	5.0
Distribution of antiwar petition/ literature	55	2.2
Other nonviolent modes	69	2.7

[a]Totals are greater than 100 percent because some institutions experienced more than one type of incident.

Table 3

Number of People in
Largest Single Incident

Number of People	Population N	Percent of Population
No incident	1,847	72.9
Less than 51	112	4.4
51-100	111	4.4
101-200	131	5.2
201-500	98	3.9
Over 500	52	2.1
Don't know how many were involved	181	7.1
TOTAL	2,532	100.0

Table 4

Number and Nature of Chief Administrative Officer's Public Statement on Student Strike[a]

Nature of Pronouncement	Population N	Percent of Population
Supported peaceful dissent	72	2.8
Deplored disorder or strike	3	0.1
Announced institution would not close	29	1.1
Announced institution would close	0	0.0
Warned of possible disciplinary action	2	0.1
Announced banning of military recruiters	5	0.2
Announced discontinuation of ROTC program	0	0.0
Announced letter of concern had been sent to Federal official	23	0.9
TOTAL institutions at which public pronouncement made	100	3.9

[a]Totals are greater than 100 because some statements included more than one pronouncement.

Appendix A DATE: April 24, 1972

(LABEL)

I.D.
Rep's Name
Institution
Telephone Number

Strat Cell

Operator's Initials: ___ ___ ___

Call back at: _____ (Time) On: Mon. _____ Tues. _____

Will return call at (time) _____

On: Mon. _____ Tues. _____

Call back ext. _____

"This is (name) calling for the Higher Education Panel of the American Council on Education.

We are calling (rep. name/you) as the representative to the Higher Education Panel. We would like to take just a couple of minutes to ask (him/her/you) a few questions."

1. Has there been any activity* on your campus in the past week as the result of the American military presence in Vietnam?

___ No, none at all**

___ Yes (Check all that apply below):

___ Student strike (Specify:

___ All classes cancelled

___ Some classes were held (About what percentage of students did not attend classes? _____)

___ Campus march or rally

___ Silent vigil

___ Destruction of property (Specify: _____

_____)

___ Occupation of building

___ Other demonstrations or protests (Describe: _____

_____

_____

*If asked, explain "activity" as
**If no, ask "you have not had any } ...strike, campus march, demonstration, or other kind of protest incident.

2. Has the president of your institution or any other chief administrative officer issued any public pronouncement in the past week on the position of your institution with respect to campus unrest or the national strike called for last Friday?

____ No

____ Yes (Specify:

____ Deplored campus disorder

____ Supported peaceful dissent

____ Warned of possible disciplinary or police action if disruption

____ Deplored call for strike

____ Announced closing of institution

____ Announced institution will not close

____ Other (Specify nature of pronouncement:_____

_____

_____

(NOTE: IF ANY CAMPUS ACTIVITY, PROCEED TO QUESTION #3, OTHERWISE, SKIP TO QUESTION #7.)

3. Approximately how many people were involved in the campus unrest activity (if more than one incident is evident, get the largest number of people in any single incident):_____ About what per-
(Number of people)
centage of these were students?_____.

4. Were off-campus civil authorities brought in?

____ No (skip to question #6)

____ Yes, local police (not campus police)

____ Yes, National Guard brought on campus

____ Yes, other (Specify:_____

_____

5. Were there any arrests?

_____ No

_____ Yes: About how many? Students_____

Nonstudents_____

6. Were there any injuries?

_____ No

_____ Yes: How many persons were injured?

Number of students:_____

Number of nonstudents:_____(Specify who:_____

_____

How were the injuries incurred?_____

_____

7. What is your estimate of the chances that there will be any unrest or other activity with respect to Vietnam on your campus this week?

_____ Not likely

_____ Yes, likely (What do you think will be its probable nature?

_____

_____

_____)

End

Appendix B

Stratification Design and Cell Weight for HEP #9 Survey

Stratification Cell for Sampling	Number of Institutions In Population	Number of Institutions In Sample	Cell Weight[a]
Public University Selectivity:			
1. Less than 550	72	5	14.4
2. 550-599	31	6	5.2
3. 600 or more	16	7	2.3
Private Universities Selectivity:			
4. Less than 550	18	6	3.0
5. 550-599	14	3	4.7
6. 600 or more	35	5	7.0
Four-Year Public College Selectivity:			
7. Less than 450	97	4	24.2
8. 450-499	66	5	13.2
9. 500 or more	73	11	6.6
10. Unknown	87	7	12.4
Four-Year Private Nonsectarian Selectivity:			
11,12,15. Unknown, or less than 575	269	18	14.9
13. 575-649	50	15	3.3
14. 650 or more	45	18	2.5
Four-Year Catholic Selectivity:			
16, 19. Unknown, or less than 500	107	12	8.9
17. 500-574	72	10	7.2
18. 575 or more	39	7	5.6
Four-Year Other Sectarian Selectivity:			
20, 21. Less than 500	110	10	11.0
22. 500-574	73	16	4.6
23. 575 or more	54	18	3.0
24. Unknown	95	6	15.8
Two-Year Public Enrollment:			
25, 26, 27, 28. Under 1,000	617	14	44.1
29. 1,000 or more	169	5	33.8
Two-Year Private Enrollment:			
30, 31. Under 250	163	10	16.3
32. 250-499	50	8	6.3
33. 500 or more	19	3	6.3
Predominantly Black			
34. Public four-year	36	3	12.0
35. Private four-year	49	8	6.1
36. Two-year	17	2	8.5

[a]Ratio between the number of institutions in the population and the number of sample institutions.